

Message Text

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PHNOM PENH 10606

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: E/AID, CB, AFSP

SUBJECT: PERSONAL SUPPORT SERVICES (ADMINISTRATIVE/LOGISTICAL)
PROVIDED TO OVERSEAS POSTS

REF: (A) STATE 113872 (B) STATE 189107 (C) STATE 137556

1. WE HAVE GIVEN CAREFUL CONSIDERATION TO THE POLICY ON PERSONAL SUPPORT SERVICES (ADMINISTRATIVE/LOGISTICAL) PROVIDED AT OVERSEAS POSTS. WE HAVE CONCLUDED THAT THE REVISION IN PERSONAL SUPPORT SERVICES PROPOSED WOULD COMPROMISE AID'S BASIC PROGRAM PURPOSES IN CAMBODIA. THE LIMITED AID STAFF SIMPLY DO NOT HAVE TIME IN THIS COUNTRY TO PERFORM THE MULTITUDE OF ADMINISTRATIVE DUTIES CALLED FOR IN THE POLICY. AID EMPLOYEES WOULD BE ADVERSELY AFFECTED AND WOULD NOT RECEIVE SUFFICIENT SUPPORT TO DO THEIR JOBS EFFECTIVELY. PERHAPS MOST SERIOUS WOULD BE THE CREATION OF A DOUBLE STANDARD OF LIVING AND SERVICES AMONGST THE OFFICIAL AMERICAN COMMUNITY WHICH WOULD AFFECT THE MORALE OF AID EMPLOYEES. IT IS RECOMMENDED AND REQUESTED THAT AID/CAMBODIA BE EXEMPT FROM OBSERVANCE OF THE POLICY SINCE IT WOULD BE CONTRARY TO THE USG INTERESTS IN CAMBODIA TO IMPLEMENT IT AT THIS TIME. APART FROM SECURITY, THE POLICY'S OBJECTIVE THE "MAXIMIZATION AND ECONOMY OF OPERATION FOR THE USG", WOULD BE IN NO WAY MET BY ADOPTION OF THE POLICY IN CAMBODIA NOW. WHEN PEACE RETURNS TO CAMBODIA AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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WHEN AID-DIRECT HIRE OR AID-FUNDED EMPLOYEES MAY HAVE A REASONABLE DEGREE OF SECURITY, FREE FROM TERRORISM AND ACTS OF WAR THIS QUESTION CAN BE RE-EXAMINED.

2. DISCUSSION: AID'S \$100 MILLION A YEAR PROGRAM IN CAMBODIA IS ADMINISTERED BY 14 OFFICERS AND A SECRETARIAL STAFF OF 5. DEPENDENTS ARE PRESENTLY NOT ALLOWED AT POST. AS PRIME TARGETS OF THE ENEMY, THE OFFICIAL AMERICAN COMMUNITY HAS BEEN SUBJECTED TO TERRORIST ATTACKS RESULTING IN DEAD AND WOUNDED, THE DESTRUCTION OF PROPERTY AS WELL AS THE PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS OF LIVING AND WORKING UNDER THIS CONSTANT STRAIN.

IT IS EMBASSY POLICY TO PROVIDE SECURITY TO THE OFFICIAL COMMUNITY AS NECESSARY. THE CHANCERY ITSELF, WHICH OFFICES AID PERSONNEL, HAS INSTALLED MAXIMUM SECURITY APPURTENANCES. ALL VEHICLES HAVE BEEN ARMORED AND BULLETPROOF PLEXIGLASS INSTALLED IN MOST. PRIVATELY-OWNED VEHICLES (POV'S) ARE NOT ONLY DISCOURAGED BUT BLANKET PERMISSION HAS BEEN OBTAINED FROM THE DEPARTMENT FOR PERSONNEL TO SELL POV'S IN ADVANCE OF THEIR DEPARTURE.

RESIDENCES HAVE BEEN EQUIPPED WITH APPROPRIATE WALLS AND FENCES, AND DEPENDING ON THE PART OF TOWN IN WHICH AN EMPLOYEE LIVES, PLEXIGLASS INSTALLED IN WINDOWS. CIVILIAN GUARDS ARE ON 24-HOUR DUTY INSIDE THE GATES OF ALL RESIDENCES AND MILITARY PERSONNEL ARE ON 24-HOUR DUTY OUTSIDE GATES. EMBASSY PERSONNEL ARE CAUTIONED NOT TO GO THE MARKETS, SHOPPING OR WALKING IN CENTRAL AND CROWDED AREAS SINGLY. CINEMAS AND OTHER PLACES OF ENTERTAINMENT ARE OFF LIMITS. WITH THIS BACKGROUND THE FOLLOWING SPECIFIC POINTS OF THE POLICY ARE DISCUSSED.

3. HOUSING, LEASING . POLICY: AID PERSONNEL SHOULD LEASE THEIR OWN HOUSES.

COMMENT: ADEQUATE AND REASONABLY COMFORTABLE HOUSING IS IN SHORT SUPPLY IN PHNOM PENH. THE COMPETITION FOR THIS HOUSING IS SHARP AMONGST FOREIGNERS AND KHMER ALIKE. MOST HOUSING REQUIRES A CONSIDERABLE INVESTMENT TO MEET MINIMUM SANITATION AND HEALTH STANDARDS, I.E., SCREENING, KITCHEN IMPROVEMENTS, ADDITIONAL POWER LINES, WIRING, HOT WATER HEATERS, IMPROVED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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PLUHLING, ETC. IT IS THEREFORE MORE ECONOMICAL FOR THE USG TO MAKE ONE-TIME INVESTMENTS IN GOVERNMENT-PROVIDED HOUSING THAN TO REPEAT THE INVESTMENT WITH THE ARRIVAL OF EACH NEW EMPLOYEE. ANY SPECIAL SECURITY MEASURES FOR RESIDENCES WOULD ALSO BE DONE MORE ECONOMICALLY ONE TIME THAN MANY TIMES. ARRANGING FOR THESE THINGS BY THE EMPLOYEE HIMSELF WOULD SIMPLY NOT BE POSSIBLE.

AID'S HOUSES WERE, FOR THE MOST PART, LEASED IN 1971 AND HAVE 5-YEAR LEASES. THE LEASES PROVIDE NO LEGAL WAY FOR THEIR TRANSFER FROM THE USG TO EMPLOYEES. IF LEASES WERE BROKEN NOW, DUE TO THE RIEL DEVALUATION, RENTS WOULD, ON THE

AVERAGE, TRIPLE. LEASES WERE ORIGINALLY EXECUTED WHEN THE RATE OF EXCHANGE WAS 55:1. THE RATE IS NOW 250:1. THE LANDLORDS WHO HAVE BEEN BADGERING THE EMBASSY TO INCREASE RENTS, WOULD, OF COURSE, BE DELIGHTED WITH TERMINATION OF ALL LEASES. IT WOULD CLEARLY NOT BE IN USG INTERESTS TO DO SO.

4. HOUSING, UPKEEP: POLICY: AID PERSONNEL SHOULD ARRANGE FOR SERVICES/UPKEEP OF THEIR RESIDENCES.

COMMENT: SERVICE PERSONNEL SUCH AS ELECTRICIANS, PLUMBERS, CARPENTERS, ETC. ARE NOT READILY AVAILABLE ON THE LOCAL MARKET. ARTISANS AND TRADE PERSONNEL WERE LARGELY VIETNAMESE AND THE VIETNAMESE FOR THE MOST PART HAVE LEFT CAMBODIA IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER. CONSEQUENTLY THE EMBASSY HAS BEEN FORCED TO BUILD A STAFF OF LOCAL GSO PERSONNEL AND TO FIND CONTRACTORS WHOSE WORK EMBASSY CAN ATTEMPT TO CONTROL FROM THE STANDPOINT OF QUALITY AND PRICE. AID EMPLOYEES WOULD HAVE TO SPEND A GREAT DEAL OF TIME TO SEARCH FOR, SUPERVISE AND BARGAIN FOR ESSENTIAL INITIAL REPAIRS AND UPKEEP SERVICES. IT WOULD BE AN EXTRAORDINARY WASTE OF EXPENSIVE AND HIGH COST AMERICAN PERSONNEL.

5. TRANSPORTATION: POLICY: EXCEPT FOR DIRECTOR'S CAR, EMBASSY PROVIDE OFFICIAL NON-PROJECT TRANSPORTATION.

COMMENT: AID'S MOTOR FLEET IS SERVICED AND MAINTAINED UNDER SAS. WE HAVE NO SEPARATE SUPPLY OF SPARE PARTS. AID CONTROLS ITS OWN VEHICLES AND THE DRIVERS ARE ON THE AID PAYROLL. CONSIDERING THE TYPE OF PROGRAM WE HAVE AND THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH WE WORK, AID'S 14 OFFICERS NEED TO BE EXTRAORDINARILY MOBILE. IN ORDER TO PROVIDE THAT MOBILITY, CLOSE CONTROL OF VEHICLES IS ESSENTIAL TO ASSURE THEIR AVAILABILITY. AS INDICATED EARLIER, POVS ARE DISCOURAGED AND ARE NOT, IN FACT, SAFE OR SECURE IN THIS CITY.

6. TRAVEL AND OTHER SERVICES. POLICY: TO BE PERFORMED BY EMPLOYEE.

COMMENT: A. VISAS, PASSPORTS, LICENSES, CAR REGISTRATION AND PERMITS, ETC., ARE COMPETENTLY AND EFFICIENTLY HANDLED BY EMBASSY PERSONNEL UNDER SAS ARRANGEMENT. MOST OF THESE SERVICES WOULD BE DIFFICULT FOR INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEES TO ARRANGE AND WOULD TAKE A LOT OF TIME AWAY FROM THEIR OFFICIAL DUTIES. WE REGARD THIS AS ANOTHER ECONOMY TO THE USG RATHER THAN HAVING EACH AID AMERICAN EMPLOYEE OUT SEEKING THE SAME SERVICES INDIVIDUALLY.

B. TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS: NOW TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS ARE HANDLED EFFICIENTLY BY GENERAL SERVICES PERSONNEL UNDER

THE SAS ARRANGEMENT. TICKETING AND ITINERARIES ARE
HANDLED DIRECTLY BY THE EMPLOYEES WITH AIRLINES REPRESENTATIVES LOCATED IN THE CHANCERY.
ENDERS

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